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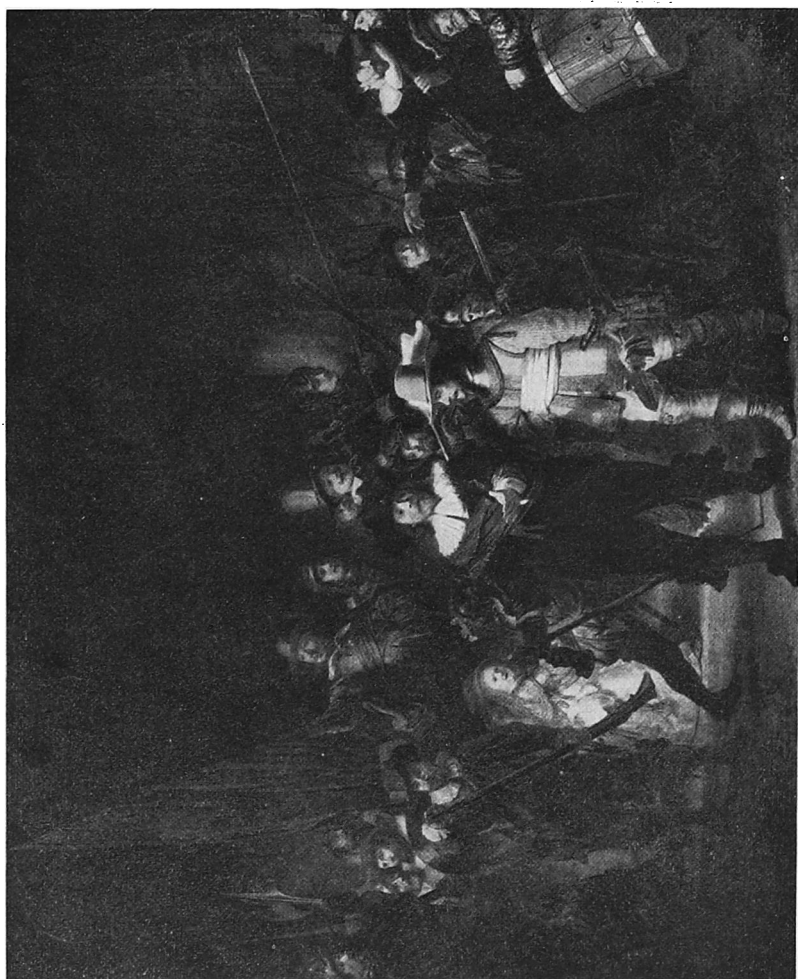
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REMBRANDT
"THE NIGHTWATCH"

THE NEW REMBRANDT ROOM OF THE RYKSMUSEUM AT AMSTERDAM.

The new Rembrandt room of the Ryksmuseum at Amsterdam is a distinct disappointment—nay, more, a failure.

One of the most glorious views on earth was the grand vista through the well-known long hall with the side alcoves when the "Corporalship of Banning Cock," better known as the "Night Watch," stood in its old place. Compare it with a first view of Niagara Falls, of the Yellowstone Park, of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, of the interior of St. Sophia in Constantinople—only thus can we realize the impression it made when, turning from behind the screen in the entrance hall of the museum, one saw in the distance that most wonderful of all paintings, which alone would have made Rembrandt "king of the brush."

True—when slowly walking through the half light of the long corridor, which only receives its light from the side alcoves, one approached the painting and entered the old Rembrandt gallery with its top light, one would notice that all the beauty of technique could not be recognized.

To remedy this defect a commission of experts, after years of preparation, has brought forth the present arrangement, which consists of a "lean-to" to the old Museum, containing the new Rembrandt room and a few smaller cabinets for the famous "Staalmeesters" and some other paintings by Rembrandt.

The result has been calculated with mathematical precision. The grand painting stands along the short wall in a room 26x39 feet. The ceiling is of oak paneling, and the light comes through a long, high window in the wall to the left of the painting, which light is broken by some ten *coulises* or screens which reflect the light evenly over the whole canvas. On the left part of the painting, nearest the window, is a disturbing reflection. With this one exception the arrangement for lighting may be considered perfect and the painting is now seen, presumably, under the same condition of light under which Rembrandt painted it. It may now be studied to better advantage. Its technical masterfulness has never before been so fully demonstrated. The problem which the commission set itself has been solved by applying every rule of yard stick, theories of light angles and calculation.

But this is not all.

The grandest painting on earth is put in a closet.

There is no distance from which to view it. Pressing close against the opposite wall one is less than forty feet away from the heroic figures that stretch over a canvas twenty feet wide. It is impossible to see the entire composition together without turning the head from side to side—a reproduction on a postal card, held at the proper distance, is more impressive.

And then to remember the glorious view of the old place!

It is a memory—but may the time come that this painting be restored to its old place, another solution of the light problem be found, and the impressive "vista of the corridor" enable us to appreciate anew the pictorial supremacy of this masterpiece.

Two exhibitions will be held in the Fine Arts Building during the coming season under the auspices of the National Academy of Design. The winter exhibition will open on December 21 and runs for one month. The spring show will open on March 15, 1907, and continue until April 21.

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An article by Joseph Israels will appear in the October number.